REALISM WITH SCENERY

Grade Shown for Magne-Traction

"Scenery brings it to life." Yes, landscaping is one of the most important parts of building a model pike. General planning of it should take place at the same time you're figuring out your railway system, and some of the actual work must be done before you lay a single section of track. Mountainous areas, rivers, valleys should be in place before track laying is done, so that working on them will not disturb your roadbed. Location of towns will depend on placing of your industrial siding and passenger stations. Keep in mind that you are developing an entire community and countryside. Everything you place in it should have a reason for being where it is.

The basic terrain (hills, valleys, etc.) can be made of wire mesh, molded over wooden supports and covered with papier-mache or plaster. Coloring is entirely up to you and will vary depending on the particular part of the country you want to represent.

Buildings such as houses, factories, churches can be constructed from plans furnished by model magazines, or from kits available at hobby shops. Once you've got the knack of it you can make all kinds of unusual buildings from your own designs.

Most of the landscaping can be done with odds and ends you'll find around the house. Actual stones will provide boulders for your mountainsides, fine sand will make roadways. Dried coffee grounds make cultivated fields, and dirt patches. Trees can be made from wire and steel wool, or pieces of sponge. Some model fans prefer Norwegian Lichen for greenery.

There is one general rule to follow in landscaping your layout—don't hurry. Take plenty of time to make each detail as life-like as possible. You'll find that working on it is as much fun as looking at the completed job. When you're finished, you'll have something to really be proud of.

AUTOMATIC TRAIN OPERATIONS

No matter how little you know about basic electrical principles when you start, you will find yourself becoming more and more familiar with them as your model pike progresses. You will discover that there is no end to the unusual effects you can produce. Some model fans have gone as far as to create thunder storms and the flashing of northern lights in the backgrounds of their layouts.

For instance, you can add a lot of excitement to your train operation through wiring effects such as these two.

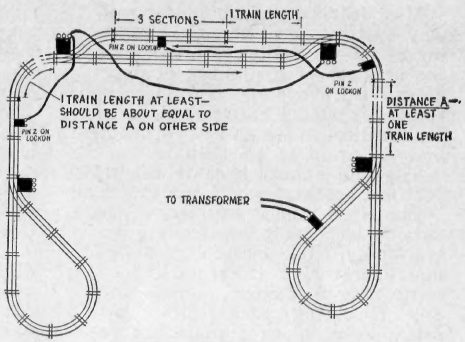

Figure 73

At the right (Fig. 73) is a wiring diagram of an automatic railroad on which two opposing trains can run indefinitely, never colliding. The secret, of course, is in letting the trains control each other. On this automatic system, a train emerging from the siding activates the train that has been deadened on the other siding. At the same time it throws switches in the proper manner.

In the operation at the bottom of the page, ground rails on the sidings are insulated so that a train always halts on them. A train at point A will provide a ground circuit through an OSS section and start the train at point B. Train A goes into the siding C, and stops. Train B goes on to complete the circuit at point A and start train A again. B takes the siding until A completes the cycle and the whole procedure continues indefinitely.

The switches are wired so that when one is open, its opposite number automatically closes.

The method is simple enough and requires little work. Special insulated "O" track sections, OSS (straight) and OCS (curved), as well as fibre pins are available at your Lionel dealer.

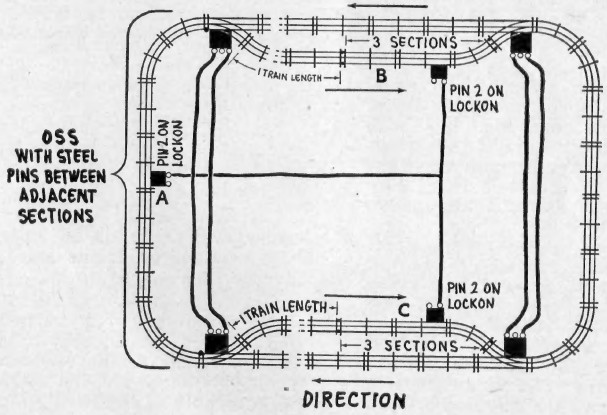

Figure 74